

Message Text

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42

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 111445Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6958

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T CAIRO 12263

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, IS, EG

SUBJECT: ISRAELI ACTIONS IN GULF OF SUEZ

REF: (A) TEL AVIV 6256, (B) STATE 224851

1. EMBASSY CONTACTED ROSS CRAIG, AMOCO EGYPT MANAGER, AT FIRST OPPORTUNITY SEPTEMBER 11. CRAIG INFORMED US THAT ON SEPTEMBER 10 AMERICAN FLAG VESSEL DEUTCHE TIDE ATTEMPTED TO REPLACE MARKER BUOYS AROUND PLATFORM 6 OF RAMADAN FIELD WHICH HAD BEEN DESTROYED BY ISRAELI GUNBOATS EARLIER. REPLACEMENT OF BUOYS NECESSARY BECAUSE ANCHOR CHAINS, WHOSE LOCATION BUOYS MARK, POSE THREAT TO INTERNATIONAL NAVIGATION. DEUTCHE TIDE ALSO INTENDED AFTERWARD TO PLACE MARKER BUOY AT SITE 304-13, SINCE RAS SHUKAIR PERSONNEL THOUGHT IT WOULD BE CONVENIENT TO USE DEUTCHE TIDE TRIP TO PLATFORM 6 TO DROP OFF MARKER BUOYS AT SITE 304-13. THESE ORDERS HOWEVER HAD NOT BEEN COORDINATED WITH AMOCO OFFICE CAIRO. ISRAELI GUNBOATS INTERCEPTED DEUTCHE TIDE AS IT BEGAN WORK REPLACING MARKER BUOYS AT PLATFORM 6 AND ORDERED DEUTCHE TIDE TO LEAVE AREA IMMEDIATELY. CRAIG BELIEVES THAT ONLY WAY ISRAELIS COULD HAVE LEARNED ABOUT PLANS TO SET MARKER BUOYS AT SITE 304-13 WAS FROM CONVERSATION BETWEEN ISRAELI GUNBOAT CAPTAIN AND DEUTCHE TIDE CAPTAIN. WHILE CRAIG IS NOT SURE OF THIS, HE IS CONFIDENT DEUTCHE TIDE DID NOT MOVE TOWARD SITE 304-13, AND THEREFORE, BELIEVED THAT THIS IS SOURCE OF IDF "INDICATION". CRAIG EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF

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REPLACING ANCHOR MARKER BUOYS AT SITE AT PLATFORM 6 IN

INTEREST OF SAFETY OF INTERNATIONAL NAVIGATION. CRAIG IS CALLING CHICAGO OFFICE WITH ABOVE REPORT AT 1500 LOCAL SEPTEMBER 11.

2. CRAIG CONFIRMED EARLIER INFORMATION THAT MARINER IS CURRENTLY ENGAGED AT SITE IN JULY FIELD AND WILL BE SO OCCUPIED FOR ABOUT TEN DAYS. CRAIG ALSO CONFIRMED OUR IMPRESSION THAT HE DOES NOT INTEND TO HEAT UP SITUATION IN NEAR FUTURE AND AT LEAST UNTIL HE HAS FURTHER INFORMATION ON ISRAELI POSITION.

3. WE ARE PUZZLED BY REFERENCE IN TEL AVIV 6256 TO GAZIT'S UNDERSTANDING THAT AGREEMENT EXISTED BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER AND AMBASSADOR TOON THAT THERE WOULD BE NO QUOTE NEW DEVELOPMENT FOR ONE WEEK. UNQUOTE AS WE HAVE REPORTED WE DO NOT BELIEVE AMOCO INTENDS TAKE ANY NEW ACTIONS WHICH WOULD PRECIPITATE FURTHER CONFRONTATION. ON OTHER HAND WE HAVE NEVER DISCUSSED WITH THEM ANY UNDERSTANDING REGARDING HALT TO OPERATIONS FOR ANY SPECIFIED TIME PERIOD.

4. COMMENT: CRAIG WAS RELUCTANT TO INFORM US OF LATEST ISRAELI INTERCEPTION OF NORMAL AMOCO ACTIVITIES IN RAMADAN FIELD FOR FEAR IT WOULD HEAT UP SITUATION ONCE AGAIN. CONTINUED ISRAELI HARASSMENT OF FUNCTIONING PLATFORM IN RAMADAN FIELD HOWEVER CAN NOT HELP BUT COME TO ATTENTION OF GOE. WE AGAIN RECOMMEND IMMEDIATE CESSATION OF ISRAELI HARASSMENT OF EXISTING FACILITIES AT RAMADAN FIELD AND SPECIFICALLY OF ACTIONS TO PROTECT SAFETY OF INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING.
MATTHEWS

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